श्री प्यारे लाल खंडेलवाल: आदरणीय सभापति जी, जैसा अभी माननीय मंत्री जी ने कहा कि हम प्रयत्न कर रहे हैं, कोशिश कर रहे हैं, लेकिन आजादी को प्राप्त हुए 60 वर्ष हो गए हैं और अभी तक देश भर के आदिवासियों की जो जमीन है, जैसा अभी मेरे एक सहयोगी ने भी कहा, हजारों की संख्या में आदिवासियों के खेत उजाड़े जाते हैं और जब फसल आती है तभी उजाड़े जाते हैं, तो मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या सरकार इस बारे में कोई नीति निर्धारित करेगी कि फसल खड़ी हुई तब जमीन को कभी उजाड़ा नहीं जाएगा, चाहे जिस परिस्थिति में भी हो? दूसरी बात, जिन आदिवासियों को अभी तक जमीन के मालिकाना पट्टे नहीं मिले हैं, क्या सरकार इस संबंध में एक निश्चित नीति निर्धारित करेगी कि जो खेती करता है, उसको उस जमीन का पट्टा मिलेगा? इस बारे में मंत्री जी क्या कहना चाहते हैं?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the suggestion given by the hon. Member will be examined ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: No, Sir. Tribals are being evicted. ...*(Interruptions)* ..

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: What they are going to do to stop it. That is the question. He has not answered, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री प्यारे लाल खंडेलवाल: सर, इसमें कितने वर्ष और लगेंगे, 60 वर्ष हो गए हैं? ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can raise another question separately.

श्री प्यारे लाल खंडेलवाल: आदिवासियों की समस्या का समाधान नहीं हो रहा है? ...(व्यवधान). . मंत्री जी जवाब दें कि अभी तक क्यों नहीं हुआ? ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. .. *(Interruptions)*... Let us allow ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्रीमती वृन्दा कारत: सर, आपसे रिक्वेस्ट है कि सरकार इसका जवाब दें ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR CHAIRMAN: Please let us allow the Question Hour to proceed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री प्यारे लाल खंडेलवाल: सर, सदन जानना चाहता है कि अभी तक क्यों नहीं हुआ? ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री रूद्रनारायण पाणि: सदन जानना चाहता है। . .(व्यवधान)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You raise a proposal to that effect.

*64. [The questioner (Shrimati N.P. Durga) was absent. For answer *vide* page 24.]

Swadhar Shelter Homes Scheme

*65. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the objective and genesis of Swadhar Shelter Homes Scheme;

(b) the progress/achievements thereof till date, particularly in Rajasthan; and

(c) the number of widows, divorced, separated women, both in rural and urban areas, rehabilitated, out of 342.90 lakh widowed women and 23.43 lakh divorced or separated women in the country, as per 2001 census?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House

Statement

(a) Swadhar Scheme has been designed with flexible and innovative approach to cater to the requirement of various categories of women in distress under difficult conditions. It was introduced in the year 2001-02. The objective of Swadhar Scheme are:—

- To provide primary need of shelter, food, clothing and care to the marginalized women/ girls living in difficult circumstances who are without any social and economic support;
- To provide emotional support and counseling to such women;
- To rehabilitate them socially and economically through education, awareness, skill upgradation and personality development through behavioral training etc.;
- To arrange for specific clinical, legal and other support for women/girls in need of those intervention by linking and networking with other organizations in both Government and non-Government sectors on case to case basis;
- To provide Help-line or other facilities to such women in distress; and
- To provide such other services as will be required for support and rehabilitation to such women in distress.

(b) As on date, under Swadhar Scheme, 210 Shelter Homes including 2 Shelter Homes in Rajasthan and 210 Women Help-lines have been sanctioned across the country.

(c) 13,238 destitute women irrespective of whether they are divorced/separated/widowed, have benefited under Swadhar Shelter Homes Scheme since the inception of this Scheme.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No. 65. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please allow the Question Hour to proceed. ...*(Interruptions)* .. Mr. Pany, please resume your place. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Raise a discussion on the subject. That would be the valid way to go about it. ...*(Interruptions)*... Q. No. 65 ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Let him answer, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please let him answer. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No. 65. ...*(Interruptions)*... Will the hon. Minister please answer the question? ...*(Interruptions)*... Q. 65 please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been prompted to ask this question ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. 64. The hon. Member is not present. ...*(Interruptions)*... The hon. Member is not present.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Sir, on Q. No. 64, I have to ask some supplementaries. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is the procedure. If the person who has asked the question is not present, we have to proceed. Yes, please go ahead.

DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been prompted to ask this question because of the plight of widows, divorcees, separated women in distress is heartrending. Apart from social stigma, ostracism, they suffer financial penury, abject poverty,

neglect of children. I want specifically to ask what has been done to help such women who were numbering 366 lakhs in 2001 Census. And in reply, it has been said, "Only 13,238 destitute women have been helped." It is a drop in the ocean. Isn't it? Will the hon. Member like to reply this supplementary? Has enough been done when the total number is 366 lakhs and help has been given to only 13,000 women? There are 563 districts in India and Shelter Homes have been opened in 210 districts. How does it reflect on the state of affairs, what we are doing about those destitute women? This is my first supplementary.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, I really appreciate the deep concern expressed by the hon. Member because this is really a segment of the society which nobody cares for. However, the consolidated figure showing the women who are destitute and widowed is taken from the Census survey. It does not necessarily mean that all the women who are widows are in need of care and shelter. There is State Government's responsibility also. It needs to apply and ask for Shelter Homes in its areas which we freely give as soon as it complies with the required parameters. Our concern for destitute women and widows is huge. We also have many private-public partnerships whereby we fund some of the NGOs in looking after widows and other women who are in need of care and protection.

DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: My second supplementary is, Sir, that in the reply it was stated that two Shelter Homes had been opened in Rajasthan. But the information that I have, at present, from the Government of Rajasthan is that only one Shelter Home had been opened in Dausa. I would like to know which the two Shelter Homes are.

Apart from that, Sir, during the last three years, 63 proposals were sent by the Government of Rajasthan to the Centre. But not even a single proposal has been accepted so far. Is it not a very strange state of affairs? The hon. Minister's expressing concern for the destitute women would not help. Is it believable that out of 336 lakh widowed women, ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put your question.

DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: ...only 13,100 women were in need of some kind of assistance? It is a travesty of truth, Sir.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, it is unfortunate that it is viewed in that way. It is a fact that we did receive a sizeable number of proposals. But the fact of the matter is that none of them has complied with the rules and regulations. I don't have powers, as a Minister, to sanction *gratis* like that out of turn and if I were to do that, he would be the first one to question me in the Parliament. We are awaiting the State Government's replies and asking them as to why they have not complied with them. On the top of that we have been bringing them up and asking them to submit their proposals on time so that we can give them the required money.

Sir, repeatedly the hon. Member has been talking about the number of widows. As I have said earlier, not all widows are in need of care and protection. May I take this opportunity to say that this is a matter of national shame if we are waiting for the Government to take care of our women in our homes? All of us, as public representatives, must ensure that the society itself and the families take the responsibility. They benefit from these women. *(Interruptions)*... These women contribute to their homes. *(Interruptions)*... I think that they should not be differentiated. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: This would not be accepted. *(Interruptions)*...

DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Can the Central Government wash of its hand by saying this?

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Sir, my supplementary is that the State Government of Tripura has taken up one scheme for widows, divorced women and deserted women for providing pension to them. There are such welfare schemes. I would like to know whether the Central Government is going to implement the schemes like this all over India.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: I am sorry, I didn't hear the last part.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: The State Government of Tripura has taken up a scheme for providing pension to the widows, divorced women and deserted women. I would like to know whether the Central Government is going to implement such type of schemes all over India.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, we have written to all the State Governments. We are on record that we have written to all the State Governments to look into the schemes and to see that they are contributing for widows' pension. We have been addressing these issues. There are several other States which are doing it as they should. After all ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: He is asking whether you have any scheme.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: I specifically said that the State Government of Tripura had taken up a scheme.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, we don't have a particular scheme that addresses widow pension as such. But we have many schemes which look after them in general We don't segregate the widows and non-widows.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Sir, I have asked about Tripura. *(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the supplementary question proceed.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: This is a terrible statement *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Sir, are the deserted women like others? *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sarkar, please sit down.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, I have already addressed this question beforehand wherein I have said that we were giving lots of logistical and financial support to NGOs who were involved in looking after widows. So we are doing it. Directly or indirectly, we are addressing this issue. We have also asked the State Governments to come out with information. *(Interruptions)*... I would also like to say that we don't have any request from Tripura. We don't have any request from Tripura. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Tripura is implementing it. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: That is very good. We congratulate Tripura for that. *(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. Please allow the Member to put the next supplementary question. *(Interruptions)*. Mr. Sarkar, you have already put your question. That is enough.

MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister...

श्रीमती वृंदा कारत: रेणुका जी, आप सेन्ट्रल लेवल पर जिम्मेदारी लीजिए न।

MR. CHAIRMAN: There should be no dialogue among the Members. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: We are funding NGOs who are looking after widows. There is no question of Central or ...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Don't give it to NGOs...*(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There should be no dialogue among Members.

MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Sir, the *Swadhar* Scheme is only a small solution to a big social problem. Is the Government considering permanent solution like pension plan, education allowance, etc. for divorcee and separated women and their children?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, we don't have a separate scheme for divorcees as such. We have brought out a whole slew of legislations through which we have empowered these women to be able to earn. They are not going to sit and wait for a dole from the Government. I think, somewhere we must take a realistic look at what we are as a society and at our collective responsibility. If we want to say that we will fund the widows separately, divorcees separately and the destitute women separately, then where does the society take the responsibility and accountability? There are laws which say that if a woman is separated from her husband, she is entitled to many things. Let us work towards implementing those laws to ensure that the man who has married her and left her alone should also remain accountable to her for the rest of her life. I think it is his headache. Do not pass it on the Government and give the man a way out to exit from there.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Sir, the hon. Minister has said that all the widows and divorcees do not need assistance from the Government. I fully agree with her. But has the Government made an assessment or study of how many of them really need assistance from the Government and from other sources? *(Interruptions)*. Criterion is already there about who needs assistance. If not, will you conduct a study on that? Secondly, you have said that through NGOs you are helping them. Kindly note that many of the NGOs are not clean. NGOs are also instruments to help them. But not all NGOs, are genuine. So, don't depend on NGOs only. Will the Government formulate a special scheme for the marginalized, divorcee and widowed women with the co-operation of the State Governments and implement it?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: To answer your first question, we have already written to the State Governments. We are waiting for the feedback from them to understand it because I had said, in the first place, that we would address the problems of widows specifically. If you want to join the divorcee women in this as part of the rehabilitation, I think that is carrying it a little too far, and it is going over the top. What I am saying is, we have written to the State Governments. We are waiting for the feedback. Let me tell you that there is absolutely no data available with any State Government to tell us that how many are widowed women; how many are divorcees and how many are separated for various reasons. Their own family abandons them very cruelly. And, repeatedly I am saying, look at the place that we are occupying collectively. We are actually talking of abrogating the responsibility of a family...(*Interruptions*) Let me complete. We are saying that in respect of women, who are divorced and separated, the Government must look after them. Now, in respect of women, who have been abandoned, we have taken up welfare measures like the setting up of Swadhar

Shelter Homes, which this question is primarily addressing. Widows and abandoned women can come to the Swadhar Shelter Homes, where they are kept for a minimum period of two years; they can stay longer if they need to. They are psychologically counselled and they are given job-specific training. They are rehabilitated and put in a forward position. Having said that,—this is what the Government is doing, and we are committed to the cause of women— I have also been repeatedly requesting this House, "let us look collectively as to how we can promote our family, as a unit, to encompass the needs of these women and look after them. After all, the family uses her *streedhan* for its bettlerment. When she becomes a widow, she is dumped. Her contribution to the family is not quantified. Nobody wants to take responsibility for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed to the next question, the Chair would like to make one point clear...(*Interruptions*) Will the hon. Member kindly resume her seat? ...(*Interruptions*) Will the hon. Members please resume their seats? Before we move to the next question ...(*Interruptions*) Will the hon. Memberskindly resume their seats? Before we take up the next question, I would like to make one thing very clear. The Question Hour is meant for putting supplementaries and eliciting answers. It is incumbent on the Members to put crisp supplementaries and for hon. Ministers to give crisp answers. Question Hour is not meant for statements or speeches. Procedures provide for totally different situations.

Now, Question No. 66.

Reservation benefits to dalit christians and muslims

*66. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether dalit christians and muslims have asked for reservation benefits;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government to their demand?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

(a) to (c) There have been demands from various quarters to specify the Scheduled Castes converted to Christianity as well as Islam, as Scheduled Castes. The government expanded the terms of reference of the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities so that it could include its recommendations on the subject. Further, Civil Writ Petitions have been filed in the Supreme Court, wherein it has been prayed to declare clause (3) of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes(Order, 1950 as unconstitutional and void as also the denial of benefits to them. Petitions has also been filed in High Courts of Bombay, Madras, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab & Haryana and Rajasthan. The matter is presently subjudice.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Sir, perhaps, the hon. Minister was aware of this ruling in advance. That is why she has given a crisp answer, but also evasive answer. So, Sir, the hon. Minister has not given a directly reply. In any case, she has mentioned that the Government has expanded the Terms of Reference of the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities so that it could include its recommendations of the subject. I would like to know whether the Commission has submitted its recommendations to the Government. Now, if the Government has received its recommendations, I would like to know whether they have